

Date: October 19, 2015
To: Lewis County Planning Commission
From: Fred Evander, Senior Long Range Planner
RE: **POTENTIAL CODE AMENDMENTS: PROCESS TO CHANGE CODE AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**
Attachments: Proposed Code Amendments (14 Pages)

The purpose of this staff report is to introduce potential changes to the Lewis County Code. These changes are meant to clarify the review process for legislative and site-specific zoning code and Comprehensive Plan amendments.

BASIS FOR PROPOSED CHANGES

Three primary issues drive the consideration of these potential code changes:

- 1. The Lewis County Code currently has no method to process site-specific rezones.** In the past, all rezones required an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and, as a result, all requests were handled as a Comprehensive Plan amendment. With the County using a more generalized Future Land Use Map (due to the Comprehensive Plan changes of 2013), the requirement to make both of these map changes concurrently is no longer necessary (in most instances). The changes proposed as part of this draft would create a new, clear process for individuals that request a rezone (see Section 17.165.010 of the proposal).
- 2. The Lewis County Code contains two separate provisions that specify how Comprehensive Plan amendments are conducted (the existing Chapter 17.12 and Section 17.165.040).** These sections are difficult to reconcile, and confusing for applicants and staff. The proposed changes would consolidate the changes into a single section of the code (see Chapter 17.170 of the draft), which is based on the existing Chapter 17.12.
- 3. Standards for the provision of public notice for Comprehensive Plan amendments are located in two separate sections of the code (the existing Section 17.05.100 and Chapter 17.12).** These sections contradict each other in regards to how to provide public notice for Comprehensive Plan amendments. The proposed code changes would remove the requirements in 17.05.100, and rely solely on the existing standards in 17.12 (which are moved to 17.170.050(2) of the draft).

Beyond these changes, the proposed code changes would also reduce the length of time of public notices for Master Plans and Special Use Permits from 30 days to 14 days (the minimum time required in RCW 36.70B.100). These proposed changes are intended to streamline the development review process, and reduce the amount of time associated with the public notice for various applications. These amendments are proposed solely because the other changes proposed as part of these amendments already require modifications to Section 17.05.100 of the code.

POTENTIAL CODE AMENDMENTS

STRUCTURE OF CHANGES

The proposed organization of the code changes is as follows:

- Section 1. Amends the existing Section 17.05.100. Amendments include the removal of the existing Comprehensive Plan public notice requirements (in 17.05.100(2)(c)) and the reduction of the required public notice time-period for Master Plans and Special Use Permits (from 30 to 14 days).
- Section 2. Removes the existing Chapter 17.12. The Chapter would largely be moved to Chapter 17.170.
- Section 3. Amends Chapter 17.165 to deal solely with site-specific amendments. Under the draft, site-specific rezone proposals would be heard by the Hearing Examiner, and be evaluated based on the criteria in 17.165.010(5). All the requirements for legislative zoning or Comprehensive Plan amendments (i.e. the type of amendments that are typically considered by the Planning Commission) would be removed from the section.
- Section 4. Creates a new Chapter 17.170 to deal solely with legislative amendments (or the type of amendments typically considered by the Planning Commission). The section would largely be based on the existing Chapter 17.12, but would remove the standards that specify how the Board of County Commissioners are intended to review code and Comprehensive Plan amendments.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff will explain these changes further at the meeting of October 27, 2015. Beyond that, staff recommends that the Planning Commission discuss the proposed code changes, and schedule a future workshop to further discuss the proposed amendments.